

here. If you want all of our kids to have a good education, then those of us who believe in the public schools have to be for high standards, for flexibility, for accountability, and for involvement by people that can help to save these kids. And you need to be involved in it.

We need businesses committed to make sure welfare reform succeeds. We've reduced welfare rolls by 3.8 million, but the easy work has been done. The people that are left on the welfare rolls are people, by and large, who came from very difficult backgrounds; many of them came from abusive home backgrounds; many of them don't have a lot of education. We have training funds; we have child care funds. The mechanisms are in place, but somebody's got to believe in them and give them a chance.

We need you to help us in all these ways, we have to bring the world of the gleaming office tower and the dark shadow together because the people who live in both places are all Americans and because we need each other. We need each other. We've got to develop the skills and potential of our people. We have to dramatically increase capital investment. We have to continue to build public-private partnerships. We have to open the doors of the executive suites, the sales floors, and the factories to talented people of all backgrounds. If we want our best people sitting in the boardrooms, our savviest clerks minding the stores, our hardest workers on the assembly lines, we've got to somehow have the talents of all of our people.

And we know from study after study after study that there are smart people, there are people who can organize, there are people who can lead, there are people who can innovate, there are people who can create in areas in America where there is no economic activity. Very often they wind up showing their leadership in less constructive ways. But they need to have an alternative. You can lead in creating that alternative.

We're going to do everything we can to put more on the table, to be a better partner, to give you more options, to support the city, to support the State, to support the private sector, to support these community groups. But you know as well as I do, just as no government can follow irresponsible policies and

stand up against the winds of the global marketplace, no government alone can bring opportunity to the people and the places that have been left behind. We'll do our part, but you have to do yours.

I thank Reverend Jackson for his insight, that he has said for years and years and years you are missing a market here. This is America's opportunity to close the opportunity gap. Let's seize it.

Thank you, and God bless you.

NOTE: The President spoke at 3 p.m. in the Windows on the World restaurant at the World Trade Center. In his remarks, he referred to civil rights leader Jesse Jackson and his daughter Santita; Richard Grasso, chairman and chief executive officer, New York Stock Exchange; Tom Jones, vice chair, The Travelers Group, Inc.; U.N. Ambassador Bill Richardson; New York State Assemblyman Gregory Meeks; Lt. Gov. Betsy McCaughey Ross of New York; H. Carl McCall, State comptroller; Sheldon Silver, State assembly speaker; Mark Green, New York City public advocate; Peter F. Vallone, New York City council speaker; and Clarence Avant, chairman, Motown Records. The President also referred to the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC).

Remarks on Community Policing in Jamaica, New York

January 15, 1998

Thank you very much. Mr. Mayor, Commissioner, Congressman Nadler, Congresswoman Maloney, thank you for being here. And I want to thank our Associate Attorney General, Ray Fisher, for coming up with me today.

Let me say that, first, I want to congratulate all the men and women in the police force in New York City, the ones who are standing behind me, the ones who are out there in the audience, and the ones who are out there on the beat. There has been an amazing turnaround in America's fight against crime in the last few years. It has basically been brought about with a new philosophy rooted in community police officers, better prevention, smarter and tougher punishment.

The Mayor and I have shared that philosophy. He and many others in both parties worked hard for the passage of the crime bill

in 1994. And it was a fascinating debate I'll never forget as long as I live. Because the crime bill was essentially written by law enforcement officials—I see Tom nodding his head—grassroots law enforcement officials across America, there was an astonishing amount of unanimity about it among Republicans and Democrats at the grassroots level. The only political problems we had with the crime bill were those that were basically occasioned, frankly, by the NRA and others when we got to supplementing rhetoric over reality at the debate of the crime bill. But now the evidence is in, and we know who was right and who wasn't.

The efforts embodied in the crime bill and the policies of cities all across America have brought the crime rate down to a 25-year low. That's an astonishing achievement. In the last 5 years alone, there's been a 22 percent drop in the murder rate nationwide, a 16 percent drop in the rate of violent crime. In neighborhoods where children couldn't walk to school alone, where elderly people double-locked themselves in their homes, people are beginning to feel confident and safe again. And community policing is at the heart of the new philosophy. It has done more to bring the crime rate down than anything else—the proper, wise deployment of police resources in a community fashion to prevent crime and to catch criminals.

Since the crime bill passed, we've come a long way toward putting our goal of 100,000 police on the street. You heard the Mayor say how many there were in New York City. We have to finish the job, however. We're about two-thirds of the way there, since 1994. We've funded about 67,000 police officers.

Today I'm pleased to announce that we are going to help New York City hire and deploy 1,600 more community police officers. With the new police officers, we now helped to fund more than 70,000 of the 100,000 community police across America. And I want you to know we intend to keep going until we've got all 100,000 on the beat. We want to get it done ahead of schedule. In the big cities like New York where the problems of crime and drugs and guns once seemed absolutely insurmountable, real progress has been made.

Now, there's still a lot to do. The Mayor talked about the drug problem. Our budget coming up has more funds for drug education, drug prevention, and drug treatment. I issued an Executive order just a couple of days ago relating to drug treatment in the State penitentiaries of the country.

The New York Times reported today that some cities, particularly smaller cities, are still struggling; cities that never felt the kind of problems you came to take for granted, or at least—not for granted—at least a part of your daily life before, and perhaps aren't as well equipped as you are to handle them. We have more to do to clean up our cities, to get more guns and gangs and drugs off the streets, and more police officers on the streets. But if we keep going we'll get the job done.

I'd also like to say, we all know that we have an unresolved problem with crime by young people, juveniles. While that rate seems to be dropping now, it has not gone down nearly as much as the overall crime rate. And I'm convinced we have to do more to deal with these young people in the hours where most of this crime is committed, which is after school but before their folks get home. We're committed to working hard with our cities to help to deal with that.

So today is a good day. Hundreds of more police officers from New York City—it means a lower crime rate for a city that has proved that the police can do the job, given the kind of community support we need and the kind of farsighted policies that I think we have to pursue together as Americans.

So thank you, Mayor. Thank you, Commissioner. Thanks to the Members of Congress. And my thanks to the people in the police department.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 5:05 p.m. in the press room in Port Authority Building #14 at John F. Kennedy International Airport. In his remarks, he referred to Mayor Rudolph Giuliani and Police Commissioner Howard Safir of New York City, and Thomas J. Scotto, president, National Association of Police Organizations.

Proclamation 7063—Religious Freedom Day, 1998

January 15, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The right to worship according to one's own conscience is essential to our dignity as human beings. Whatever our religious beliefs, they represent the essence of our personal values and cannot be dictated to us. Recognizing this truth, our founders made religious liberty the first freedom guaranteed in the Bill of Rights. They wisely understood as well that in protecting the free exercise of religion, we must also prohibit the establishment of religion by the state.

Among the early European settlers who came to our shores were many seeking to escape the religious compulsion and persecution they had endured in the lands of their birth. William Penn, Roger Williams, and many others would strive to make their settlements havens for freedom of conscience, laying the foundation for the great tradition of religious liberty that would ultimately find expression in the First Amendment to the Constitution. Since those early days, our continuing aspiration has been to banish lingering prejudice and increase religious understanding and respect among our people.

Today, millions of people of different faiths call America home. The churches, synagogues, temples, mosques, and other houses of worship they have built have become centers of community life and service and a source of strength for our Nation. As our country becomes increasingly diverse, we must reaffirm our efforts to reach out to one another and to see past our differences to the values we hold in common.

My Administration is striving to enhance this climate of acceptance and respect, bringing people together across lines of faith. Two years ago, with the help of a broad coalition of religious and civic leaders, we created guidelines clarifying the nature of religious expression permitted in our public schools and reaffirming that America's young people do not have to leave their religious beliefs at the schoolhouse door. With the help of

that same coalition, I issued additional guidelines last August to reinforce the right of religious expression in the Federal workplace. Building on America's long-standing commitment to freedom and fairness, these guidelines will ensure that Federal employees may engage in personal religious expression to the greatest extent possible, consistent with workplace efficiency and the requirements of law. The guidelines also clarify that Federal employers may not discriminate in employment on the basis of religion and that an agency must reasonably accommodate employees' religious practices.

On Religious Freedom Day this year, as we celebrate and cherish this precious right we enjoy as Americans, we must not forget others who are less fortunate. Throughout the world, in many lands, too many people still suffer and die for their beliefs, and lives, families, and communities are torn apart by old hatreds and prejudices. We must continue to proclaim the fundamental right of all peoples to believe and worship according to their own conscience, to affirm their beliefs openly and freely, and to practice their faith without fear or intimidation. The priceless gift we have inherited from past generations will only grow in value as we share it with others.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim January 16, 1998, as Religious Freedom Day. I call upon the people of the United States to observe this day with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs, and I urge all Americans to reaffirm their devotion to the fundamental principles of religious freedom and religious tolerance.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this fifteenth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

William J. Clinton

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